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Thesis

THE UNITED STATES AND THE CONGRESS OF PANAMA OF 1826

Submitted by

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(B.S.E., Teachers College, City of Boston, 1928)

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The United States and the  
Congress of Panama of 1826

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## Introduction.

The Congress of Panama met in the city of that name in June 1826. Four nations - Colombia, Mexico, Central America and Peru - participated in the deliberations of the congress. Great Britain and Holland were represented by unofficial agents.

Other nations had been invited to attend the congress, but owing to various reasons, failed to be represented. Included in this latter group was the United States of America. A prolonged debate had taken place in the Congress of the United States on the subject of the expediency of that country attending the Congress of Panama. The result was that the delegates were not finally commissioned until May 8, 1826 and it was mid-June before Mr. Anderson, the United States minister to Colombia, and one of the delegates chosen to represent the United States at the congress, started for Panama. Enroute he took ill with a fever and died before reaching his destination.

Mr. Sergeant, of Pennsylvania, the other United States delegate, refused to go to Panama in the summer season because of the extreme heat and the generally unhealthful conditions and offered to resign his commission. <sup>(1)</sup> Mr. Clay, the Secretary of State, permitted Mr. Sergeant to postpone his departure until the autumn.

By that time the Congress of Panama had been adjourned to Tacubaya, Mexico. Thither Mr. Sergeant traveled in the autumn of 1826. Colombia was the only other nation to send delegates to Tacubaya and so the adjourned meeting of the congress never took place.

Very little of practical importance was accomplished by the Congress of Panama. Even the conventions drawn up at Panama between the representatives of the Spanish American States present, were ratified by Colombia only.

(1) See page 44, below.



But did the United States miss an opportunity for good by failing to participate in the Congress of Panama? In the following pages we shall examine into certain details of the story of the congress, stressing in particular the attitude of the United States Congress with regard to it. By so doing we hope to arrive at a probable answer to the above question.

### Status of the Latin American States in 1826.

To understand the story of the Congress of Panama it is well to bear in mind the position in world affairs which the Latin American states had assumed by 1826.

By that year all of the former colonies of Spain on the mainland of America had revolted and had set up independent governments, every one of which, had, by 1826, become a republic in form. These new states had been recognized as independent by the United States and Great Britain. But Spain had not, as yet, acknowledged their independence. Thus the Spanish American states were living in more or less fear of an attack by Spain or rather by Spain supported and abetted by the Holy Alliance.

In the former Portuguese colony of Brazil, an independent empire had been set up with Dom Pedro, the son of the King of Portugal as "Constitutional Emperor and Perpetual Defender of Brazil." (1) In 1825 Portugal had recognized the independence of its former colony.

The Spanish American states, in their war with Spain, looked upon Brazil as a neutral.

Of all the colonies of Spain in America the only ones which had not broken away from her sway were the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico in the West Indies.

Colombia and Mexico were planning attacks upon these islands in order to wrest them from Spain. These war-like plans troubled the United States which was determined that Cuba, lying in such close

(1) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings. p. 37





proximity to its own shores, could never be held by any nation but Spain. Accordingly, the United States had requested Colombia and Mexico to suspend their aggressive preparations until the outcome of certain negotiations, leading toward peace between Spain and her former colonies and which the United States was fostering, should be known.

Another troublesome spot in the West Indies was Haiti. This former colony of France had gained its independence through a slave insurrection. France had recognized its independence in return for special commercial favors. The Haitians had set up a negro republic in which no office could be held by a white man.

The United States had not recognized the independence of Haiti. The Spanish American republics, although they had emancipated all slaves within their own borders, had not recognized the independence of Haiti but some of them were considering the matter.

#### Origin and Purpose of the Congress.

The idea of a congress of the newly revolted Spanish American states to discuss plans of political union was under consideration as early as 1810 when Chile broached the subject to Buenos Aires. The latter thought the idea impracticable. (1)

Simon Bolivar, the Liberator, dreamed of a great confederation of all the Spanish American states. As early as September 1815 he wrote, "How beautiful it would be if the Isthmus of Panama should become for us what the Isthmus of Corinth was for the Greeks! Would to God that we may have the fortune some day of holding there some august congress of the representatives of the republics, kingdoms, and empires of America to deliberate upon the high interests of peace and of war." (2)

(1) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings. p. 285

(2) Ibid. p. 289 - citing from Cartas de Bolivar, Sociedad de Ediciones, 145-50.



Bolivar believed that this confederation would need the protection of a powerful nation. His thoughts turned to a protective alliance with Great Britain in which the latter country would shield the weak American states from the attacks of their enemies. But, as we shall see, Great Britain refused to enter into such a protective alliance. Bolivar never thought of forming such an alliance with the United States of America nor did he invite her to be present at the Congress of Panama.

The objects which the Spanish Americans hoped to attain through the Congress of Panama may be seen in a dispatch which the Colombian government sent, in March 1825, to its representative in Buenos Aires, stating the objects of the congress and asking that they be brought to the notice of the officials of the latter country. (1)

These objects included the formation of a defensive confederacy against Spain and the consideration of such questions as attacks upon Cuba and Porto Rico, the status of Haiti, controversial points in international law, and the "means of giving effect to the declarations of the President of the United States of America in his message to the Congress of last year." (2)

This list of objects was almost identical with one that appeared in February 1825 in the "Gaceta de Colombia". This paper "though not an official government organ, was at least friendly to the administration and responded to the desires of Vice-President Santander. He often spoke of it as 'our gazette' and according to his own statements frequently wrote articles for publication in its columns." (3)

(1) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings. p. 321

(2) Ibid. p. 321 - citing from British & Foreign State Papers, XII, 894

(3) Ibid. p. 241 - citing from O'Leary, Memorias III, 105, 111, 124, 137  
353, 390.





This article in the Gaceta de Colombia was copied by newspapers in the United States and was therefore known to the various statesmen interested in the Congress of Panama. (1) It was mentioned by Hayne, in his speech in the Senate, during the Panama Congress debate.

#### The Invitations to the Congress.

In December 1824 Bolivar sent a circular letter to all the Spanish American republics inviting them to send delegates to an "Assembly of Plenipotentiaries" to be held at Panama. (2) Colombia, Mexico, Central America and Peru accepted. Bolivia and Chile finally accepted but too late to take part in the deliberations.

Brazil, as a neutral South American state, was also invited. She, too, accepted but failed to send a delegate.

An invitation to France was given, late in 1825, through the Colombian agent in Paris. (3)

A few months before this time France had seemed distinctly interested in affairs in the Western Hemisphere. She had had a large fleet in West Indian waters, near Cuba. Its appearance off the Colombian coast had caused that country to become panicky from fear of a French attack. However, upon certain representations by the United States as to its attitude toward Cuba, the French withdrew without any aggressive act.

This episode would lead one to believe that France would be sufficiently interested in the doings of Spanish America to wish to be represented at the Congress of Panama. But such was not the case. France did not accept and acted with indifference towards the proposal.

An invitation was extended through the Colombian minister at London to Great Britain.

(1) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 322

(2) Ibid. p. 312

(3) Arragon, Reginald, F. - The Congress of Panama. p. 305



George Canning, the British Secretary for Foreign Affairs had given this matter much thought. In June 1825 he wrote to Liverpool that he had been "reflecting a good while on the difficulty in which we are likely to be placed by the intended Congress of American States - more especially if, as is not improbable, the United States of North America are invited to send a deputy to it. Shall we send a minister there if invited or uninvited, or shall we take no notice of it. Either is embarrassing; but I incline to think the last, though the easiest - the most dangerous course of conduct. Yet, if we send, to what specific purpose?"(1)

The British government finally did accept the invitation to the Congress of Panama and Edward J. Dawkins was appointed as a commissioner ( not a minister-plenipotentiary) to act as an observer of the meetings of the Congress but not to take part in its deliberations. He was to give advice to the Latin Americans when they desired it or seemed to need it. With Dawkins there was also appointed a secretary and four assistants. (2)

Holland sent Col. Van Veer to represent her at the Congress of Panama. (3)

So far as can be learned from the Dutch archives and those of Spanish America, Holland received no invitation to be present at the congress. (4)

During the Napoleonic period, a lucrative contraband trade had sprung up between the Dutch and the Spanish American colonies and now that these colonies had become independent nations, Holland wished to retain this trade.

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 298; citing from Stapleton, A. G. Some Official Correspondence of George Canning, Vol. I. 273-4.

(2) Ibid. p. 299

(3) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings. p. 313

(4) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama, p. 306





Also, at this time, the Dutch seemed to be imitators of the English. When Great Britain recognized the new republics of America, Holland followed suit. Now that Great Britain was sending an unofficial delegate to the Congress of Panama, Holland also sent one. Thus we find Col. Van Veer in Panama in July 1826 as an unofficial observer of the proceedings of the congress and letting the Spanish American republics know that Holland was sympathetically interested in their welfare. (1)

The invitation to the United States to attend the Congress of Panama came through the governments of Colombia, Mexico and Central America and not directly from Bolivar.

The real object which the Spanish Americans had in view in inviting the United States to the congress was to obtain from the latter government a clear statement of what was meant by Monroe's declaration of December 1823. Did the United States intend to aid the Spanish American states in case they were attacked by a European power? Perhaps, too, there was some expectation on the part of the newly liberated republics of "translating the Monroe Doctrine into a more definite engagement." (2)

In fact Colombia was already placing the Monroe Doctrine on the "program for the Congress of Panama and was making it the occasion for the attendance of the United States." (3)

The first hint that the presence of the United States was desired at the Congress was given orally in April 1825 by the ministers of Colombia and Mexico as a sort of feeler to ascertain if a formal invitation would be acceptable.

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama, p. 306

(2) Perkins, Dexter - The Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1826. p. 205

(3) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama, p. 371



Henry Clay, the Secretary of State, was enthusiastic over the prospect of the congress. He saw in it the "completion of his American system." (1) President Adams was much less enthusiastic. He saw that the United States and Latin America were very much unlike each other in many ways. Still, it seemed to him that participation in the congress by the United States would show a spirit of cordiality and good will toward the new republics but he felt that more should be known of the objects of the congress, its method of organization etc., before the United States could consent to participate in it. (2)

Accordingly, Clay let the ministers of Colombia and Mexico know that the administration looked favorably on the idea of the congress but wished to have more definite knowledge concerning the subjects to be discussed, the powers to be given to the diplomatic representatives and the kind of organization and methods of procedure under which the congress was to deliberate.

Finally in November 1825 formal invitations to attend the Congress of Panama were received by the United States from the governments of Colombia, Mexico and also Central America. These invitations enumerated, though not very specifically, the subjects to be discussed at the meetings. Nothing was said about the powers with which the delegates were to be invested or of the methods of procedure and manner of organization of the congress. (3)

Despite these discrepancies in the invitations the administration accepted them and let the Spanish American states know that commissioners from the United States would be sent, subject to the consent of the Senate.

(1) Turner, F. J. - Rise of the New West. p. 280

(2) Adams, J. Q. - Memoirs. Vol. VI. 531-536.

(3) Burgess, J. W. - The Middle Period. 1817-1858. p. 148; also Gales & Seaton's Register of Debates in Congress - 1826, Vol. II Appendix, pp. 44-46.





The first delegate chosen by the administration was Richard C. Anderson of Kentucky, who, at the time of the invitations to the Congress of Panama, was the United States minister to Colombia. He came of a well-known Kentucky family. His father had been an officer in the Revolution. His mother was a sister of George Rogers Clark. His brother, Robert Anderson, was to be, in later years, the defender of Fort Sumter. In his earlier years, Richard C. Anderson had been a member of the legislature of Kentucky and, a little later, a Congressman. While in the latter position he showed sympathy with the struggles towards independence of the Spanish American states and urged their recognition by the United States. He had been appointed minister to Colombia in 1823 by President Monroe. (1)

When President Adams proposed to Mr. Anderson that he attend the projected Congress at Panama the latter accepted immediately.

Secretary Clay desired very much to have Albert Gallatin named as Anderson's colleague at the congress and communicated with him with regard to the matter. But Mr. Gallatin refused the post for fear of danger to his health from the climate of Panama and because of a lack of knowledge of the Spanish language. (2)

John Sergeant of Pennsylvania, a friend of President Adams, was then named for the position. Mr. Sergeant had represented Pennsylvania in the Congress of the United States from 1815 to 1823. In 1832 he ran as vice-president on the same ticket with Clay in the latter's campaign against Jackson. Later, we again find him in Congress from 1827 to 1829 and from 1837 to 1842. (3).

Sergeant willingly accepted the appointment to represent the United States at the Congress of Panama.

(1) Dictionary of American Biography.

(2) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama. p. 374

(3) Encyclopedic Dictionary of American Reference.





William B. Rochester a "member of the seventeenth Congress and a New York Circuit Judge" (1) was named as Secretary to the United States delegates and accepted the appointment.

Great Britain and the Congress of Panama.

The objects which, apparently, Great Britain hoped to gain by attendance at the Congress of Panama may be stated as follows:--the maintenance of the predominant position which she held in Spanish American affairs; the lessening of the influence of the United States in Spanish America; the bringing about of peace between the new republics and Spain on terms suggested by Great Britain and through her good offices.

In the formal records of the Congress of Panama, Great Britain is mentioned only twice. On July 23, 1826, after the credentials of Dawkins had been examined it was resolved that a letter of acknowledgment be sent to Canning and another to Dawkins. July 15, 1826 it was recorded that Mr. Dawkins be informed of the decision of the Congress to adjourn to Tacubaya. (2)

To find accounts of the aims and actions of the British with regard to the Congress of Panama we must look at the correspondence of Canning, of Dawkins, and the unofficial correspondence of the delegates to the congress.

Bolivar had dreamed of a protective alliance with Great Britain. But Canning refused to entertain thoughts of such an alliance with the Spanish American states. Santander, the Colombian vice-president, in writing to Bolivar under date of December 23, 1826 of Canning's attitude in this matter said the latter feared " that the other nations may view illy this league and particularly the United States of the North. He declared that England aspired only to maintain with the

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama. p. 375

(2) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings. pp. 371-2.



American States the relations which she has established unless some unforeseen events oblige her to take another course." (1)

So Dawkins received no directions to form an alliance with the Spanish American states. Canning in his instructions to Dawkins, given March 18, 1826, said, "His Majesty has no other object than to obtain the most regular and correct information of its proceedings and to assure the American States collectively of the friendly sentiment and the lively interest in their welfare and tranquility, which His Majesty has repeatedly expressed." (2)

Mr. Arragon, who has made a scholarly study of the matter says, "Observation and expression of good will alone would not have justified the dispatch of an agent and two secretaries to distant and insalubrious Panama." (3)

Further on in his instructions, Canning states that Dawkins was to make clear to the various delegates, in an informal way, "that the principles of maritime Law to be adopted by the new States may be those which Great Britain has always contended to be the true principles growing out of long established usage and of prescriptive authority in the Old World; upon which Great Britain has uniformly acted and of which she has as uniformly respected the exercise by others and by none more than by the New States of America, themselves. And you will take care to have it duly understood that our determination to act upon these principles, as it has not been shaken by European Confederacies, so it will not be altered by any Resolution or combinations of the States of the New World." (4)

The article in the Gaceta de Colombia, listing the subjects Colombia wished to have discussed in the congress had been published in

(1) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama p. 295, quoting from O'Leary, Memorias Vol. III. 341

(2) Ibid. p. 299, quoting from the archives of the Foreign Office 97 Vol. 115

(3) Ibid. p. 300.

(4) Ibid. p. 301, quoting Canning to Dawkins, Foreign Office 97, Vol. 115





February 1825 and the matter of the "rights of nations, which are of a controversial nature" (1) was among them. This, perhaps, accounts for Canning's statement as given above.

Also, in this connection, it is interesting to note that, in the following December, President Adams, in his special message to the Senate mentioned "The doctrine that free ships make free goods and the restrictions of reason upon the extent of blockades" (2) as subjects which might properly be discussed at the congress.

Again, in his instructions to Dawkins Canning said that he wished to be informed as to how the new republics felt, "toward each other and the degree of influence in their careers which they may appear to allow to the United States of North America. You will understand that to a league among the states, lately colonies of Spain, limited to objects growing out of their common relations to Spain, His Majesty's Government would not object but, any project for putting the United States of North America at the head of an American Confederacy as against Europe would be felt as an ill return for the service which has been rendered to those States and the dangers which have been averted from them, by the countenance and friendship and publick declaration of Great Britain and it would too, probably, at no very distant period endanger the peace of both America and Europe." (3)

An attempt to lessen the influence of the United States in Spanish America by the government of Great Britain can be seen in the question of Cuba. It is certain that Great Britain had wished to see Cuba remain in the hands of Spain. It is a fact that Canning, on April 2, 1824, before his government had recognized the independence

(1) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings p. 321, quoting British & Foreign State Papers, XII, 894.

(2) Richardson, J. D. - Messages and Papers of the Presidents. p. 319

(3) Temperley, W.H.V. - The Later American Policy of George Canning, in American History Review, XI, 787, citing Public Record Office, Foreign Office, Colombia 50.



of the American republics and because of his strong desire to have it do so, had informed Ferdinand of Spain that if the latter would recognize the new American republics, the British government would guarantee Cuba to Spain. (1) He wished Great Britain to recognize the new states and he believed recognition by Spain would hasten this procedure. So he used Cuba as a bait.

But, the countries which, in 1826, were most likely to lead an attack upon Cuba were Colombia and Mexico. Yet Canning wrote in his instructions to Dawkins, "The British Government is so far from denying the right of the new states to make an hostile attack upon Cuba - - that we have uniformly refused to join with the United States in - - remonstrating against the supposed intention or intimating that we should feel displeasure at the execution of it. We should, indeed, regret it, but we arrogate to ourselves no right to control the operations of one belligerent against another. The Government of the United States now professes itself of a different opinion." (2)

Perkins, in his special study of the Monroe Doctrine of this period says, "Certainly no words could have been more cunningly calculated to widen the rift between the new republics and the United States." (3)

The British agent, Dawkins, reached Panama on June 2, 1826. He never took part in the deliberations of the congress but had frequent private conversations with the various delegates. From the correspondence of Dawkins and that of the delegates to the congress we can learn something of the subjects discussed in these conferences.

Among other things, Dawkins upheld the sincerity of his government in its attempts to mediate between the Spanish American republics and Spain by contradicting the statement of Alexander H. Everett, the United

(1) Perkins, D. - The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826 p. 249, citing from Canning's dispatch, London, Public Record Office, Foreign Office, Spain. Vol. 284 No. 14 Apr. 2, 1824.

(2) Ibid. p. 251, quoting from London, Public Record Office, Foreign Office Colombia, Vol. 50, Mar. 18, 1826.

(3) Ibid. p. 251.





States minister to Spain who had claimed that England had made no formal attempt at mediation since she had recognized the new republics. Dawkins produced copies of dispatches to prove the sincerity of Great Britain in this matter. Mr. Gual, a Colombian delegate who had begun to show a coolness towards the English was completely won over by Dawkins and spoke of "the imprudence of the United States, of the errors committed by Mr. Everett, and of the mischief which may be done by the indiscreet publication of his correspondence." (1)

Thus Dawkins, in a dispatch to Canning was able to say, "The general influence of the United States is not, in my opinion, to be feared. It certainly exists in Colombia, but it has been very much weakened even there by their protests against an attack on Cuba and by the indiscretions they have committed at Madrid." (2)

However, the greatest efforts of Dawkins at Panama were expended in an effort to increase the prestige and the predominant position which Great Britain held in Spanish America. The best way to do this was to give the new nations what they needed and desired most, that is, peace.(3) But this happy outcome he would like to have seen accomplished according to methods favored by the British. So he suggested to the various delegates that Spanish America might bring Ferdinand of Spain to terms if it offered a money payment by way of reimbursing Spain for the loss of her colonies. He offered the services of his government as the mediator in such a proposal.

Most of the Spanish Americans, however, were opposed to this method of acquiring recognition from Spain. Also, they wished the first step towards peace to be taken by the latter country.

(1) Temperley, H.W.V. The Later American Policy of George Canning, American History Review XI, 789.

(2) Ibid. 793, citing Public Record Office, Foreign Office, Colombia 36

(3) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings p. 371





The United States, too, was opposed to any money payment by the new republics. Clay, in his instructions to the delegates from the United States said, "Nor would their honor or national pride allow them to entertain or deliberate on propositions founded upon the notion of purchasing, with a pecuniary consideration, the Spanish acknowledgment of their independence." (1)

However, Dawkins persisted in urging this idea to such an extent that certain of the Spanish American Delegates believed it to be the main object of his visit to Panama. (2)

With regard to this matter, Mendez, one of the Colombian delegates, after the adjournment of the congress wrote, "The English commissioner in Panama never ceased preaching to us about the necessity of granting an indemnity to Spain as a sine qua non of recognition. After the assembly had adjourned he suggested that Mr. Canning would be very much displeased to know that we had made no proposal of peace to Spain, and that this would be viewed in Europe as proof that we were for settling everything by force and thus following the footsteps of the French republic." (3)

But Dawkins's attempts to induce the new republics to make peace by the payment of an indemnity were cut short by the adjournment of the congress to Tacubaya. Dawkins was disappointed in this adjournment and did not enter Mexico to be present at it.

In general, then, it may be said that Canning, at the time of the Congress of Panama, was actuated by jealousy and distrust of the United States. On this point Perkins says of Canning, "He was nervously anxious over the possibility of a general trans-atlantic league

(1) Niles' Weekly Register. Vol. XXXVI. p. 73

(2) Lockey, J. B. \* Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 375

(3) Ibid. p. 373, citing O'Leary, Memorias, VIII, 215 - Mendez to Bolivar.



of the governments of the New World of which the United States would have the sole direction. His jealousy of the American government is beyond question." (1)

Also, it is certain that Dawkins's efforts to initiate peace negotiations between the new republics and Spain on the basis of a monetary compensation were unsuccessful. It is also doubtful if he were successful in his attempts to lessen, in general, the influence of the United States in Spanish America. Dawkins's greatest success, undoubtedly lay in preserving the cordiality existing between Great Britain and Spanish America.

The general attitude of Great Britain toward the assembly of American states at Panama is well summed up in the following words of Mr. Arragon:--"Canning did not care to challenge the Continental powers and the United States nor to alarm the new republics by a readiness to accept a protectorate or even exclusive treaty privileges in Spanish America. In view of the predominance of British trade, capital and influence, there was no need to do so. On the other hand, he would not allow a privileged status to be gained by the United States nor a continental system to be created which would treat England as alien to the New World." (2)

#### Political Conditions in the United States in 1825.

To understand the attitude taken by the Congress of the United States towards Adams's proposal to send delegates to the Congress of Panama, it is necessary to glance at the political conditions that existed in the United States in 1825 and 1826.

The presidential election of November 1824 had been indecisive, i. e., no one of the four candidates had received a majority of the electoral votes. Therefore the names of the three leading candidates

(1) Perkins, D. - The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826 p. 250

(2) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama. p. 303





( Jackson, Adams, and Crawford) were sent to the House of Representatives and that body selected Adams as the next president.

Thereupon the adherents of Jackson set up a great cry that fraud and injustice had been worked. They declared that their candidate, who had received the largest proportion of electoral votes (though not a majority of them) had been cheated out of the presidency; that Adams had gained the office through collusion with Clay, who had been the fourth candidate in the campaign. This cry became all the louder when Adams, upon assuming the presidency, nominated Clay as his Secretary of State.

The elements opposed to Adams were so bitter that they seemed determined to do all in their power to discredit him and to prevent the accomplishment of any constructive program which he might set forth. This attitude of opposition can be seen in more than one episode from 1825 to 1829 but it was first strongly shown in the case of the Congress of Panama.

#### The United States and the Congress of Panama.

In his annual message to Congress on December 6, 1825, President John Quincy Adams referred briefly to a congress to be held at Panama stating that "the invitation has been accepted and ministers on part of the United States will be commissioned to attend at those deliberations and to take part in them so far as may be compatible with neutrality." (1)

The matter was not taken up again by the President until December twenty-sixth. The reason for the delay was the fact that the Senate was hesitating with regard to the confirmation of Rufus King, the President's choice for the post of minister to London and Henry Clay, the Secretary of State, thought it would be well to delay the presentation of the names of the delegates to the Congress of Panama until

(1) Richardson, J. D. - Messages and Papers of the Presidents Vol.II p.302



King's appointment had been confirmed. In this way two weeks were lost. (1)

### The Panama Mission in the U.S. Senate.

On December 26, 1825, President Adams delivered a special message to the Senate on the subject of the participation by the United States in the Congress of Panama and he submitted the names of the delegates for the confirmation of the Senate.

According to this message it was not the intention of the United States to take part in any deliberations of a belligerent kind, nor to contract any alliances, nor to engage in any activities hostile to other nations.

Measures in which the United States might well take part were the consideration of "principles of liberal commercial intercourse"; the discussion of maritime neutrality and blockade and the establishment, if possible, of the "doctrine that free ships make free goods."

The meeting would be a splendid opportunity to give proof of our good will to all the new republics to the south of us.

Another topic suggested for discussion was the advancement of religious liberty.

With regard to the Monroe Doctrine it was said, "An agreement between all the parties represented at the meeting, that each will guard by its own means against the establishment of any future European colony within its borders may be found advisable."

The problem of Cuba, while not mentioned by name, was introduced into the message in such a way that all familiar with the policy of the administration in this matter, understood what was meant.

Anderson and Sergeant were proposed for the positions of "Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary to the Assembly of American nations at Panama." William B. Rochester was named as secretary of the delegation. (2)

(1) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama p. 461

(2) Richardson, J. D. Messages and Papers of the Presidents Vol. II, 318-320





Accompanying the message were copies of the correspondence with the ministers of Colombia, Mexico and Central America.

The matter was then given into the hands of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee for study and report. This committee contained one staunch friend of Adams, Mills of Massachusetts. All the other members were opponents of the administration. It had been charged that the committee had been "packed" by Vice-President, John C. Calhoun. However that may be, it is certain that it fell to Calhoun to fill three vacancies in the committee and all three were anti-administration men. (1)

On January 9, 1826 in answer to a request of the Senate, Adams sent to that body translations of the conventions which Colombia had entered into with Peru, Mexico and Central America and those parts of the correspondence between the United States and Russia, France, Colombia and Mexico that were concerned with Latin American affairs. All these papers were reported to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Apparent discrepancies were found by the senators on the committee between the items mentioned in the President's message of December twenty-sixth and the aims of the Spanish American states. Thus the committee found that Colombia thought the Monroe Doctrine should be enforced "by the joint and united efforts of all the states to be represented in the Congress who should be bound by a solemn convention to secure this end." (2)

The opposition senators considered as the objects of the congress, those suggested by Spanish America rather than "the propositions the United States was willing to discuss in the purely consultative body which Adams and Clay had in mind." (3)

(1) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama p. 476, citing Calhoun, Works, Vol. VI, 346. also

Williams, Edwin - Statesmen's Manual N Y 1854 p. 656

(2) Benton, T. H. - Thirty Years' View Vol. I. 68

(3) Turner, F. J. - Rise of the New West. p. 280





The fact that the assembly at Panama was to consist of belligerents and neutrals and that the delegates from the latter states were to act merely as observers when belligerent actions were under consideration, carried little weight with the committee, (1) which finally reported adversely on the proposition.

In this adverse report the committee answered Adams's message step by step and drew upon all possible arguments against participation in the Congress of Panama by the United States. This report was rendered by Senator Macon and ended with the recommendation that the following resolution be adopted by the Senate:--"Resolved, that it is not expedient, at this time, for the United States to send ministers to the Congress of American Nations assembled at Panama." (2)

But certain senators who were opposed to the Administration did not even wait for the report of the Foreign Relations Committee before beginning their attack. Shortly after the President's message of December 26, 1825 had been delivered and while the matter of the Panama mission was still in the hands of the committee, Senator Branch of North Carolina introduced a resolution into the Senate which charged the President with having exceeded his powers. Many of the senators had been angry at the dictatorial way in which President Adams, in his annual message of December sixth had said that, "ministers will be commissioned" without mentioning consultation with the Senate. They apparently overlooked the fact that in his message of December twenty-sixth, the President had asked the advice and consent of the Senate in this matter.

In his Memoirs under date of December 31, 1825 President Adams says, "Mills gave me a printed copy of the resolution offered by Mr. Branch to the Senate declaring that the President of the United States has no right or power to appoint Ambassadors or public Ministers but with the advice and consent of the Senate except in cases of vacancy

(1) Lockett, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings pp. 322-23

(2) Gales & Scaton's Register 1826, column 152.



which may happen during the recess of the Senate. It is preceded by a 'Whereas, the President of the United States, did, by his message at the commencement of the Senate, assert that Ministers would be commissioned to Panama without submitting them to the Senate and whereas, though he did submit them to the Senate he yet maintained the right of sending them without concurrence of the Senate; therefore, to guard against the precedent, Resolved' etc. I told Mills that the preamble or whereas, upon which the resolution was founded, was a statement incorrect in point of fact, charging me with having asserted that which I never did assert. I said I considered the Executive competent to institute a new mission and appoint members during the recess of the Senate but that when the Senate were in session, they must be nominated." (1)

Then again under date of January 2, 1826 Adams says, "Mr. Lloyd said the resolution was not drawn up by Mr. Branch who was a mere tool in the hands of another man behind the curtain. .... It proceeded undoubtedly from a disposition unfriendly to me; but perhaps the positive manner in which I had expressed myself had given some handle to the construction which the resolution gave to my words." (2)

However, nothing ever came of this resolution. Mr. Branch was frequently absent from Senate meetings owing to home troubles and was not able to push it through. On April 27, 1826, Senator Branch's motion was laid on the table by a vote of 23 to 21. (3)

Although the Foreign Relations Committee had made its report on January sixteenth, the consideration of its resolution was postponed until February first, on which day the President sent to the Senate, in answer to its request, selected parts of the correspondence between

(1) Adams, J. Q. - Memoirs Vol. VII, 96

(2) Ibid. p. 99

(3) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 407





the United States and Spain with regard to the proposed mediation of Russia in an attempt to bring about peace between Spain and her former American colonies. (1)

No other action was taken until February 15, 1826 when Senator Van Buren, the leader of the opposition, moved that the question as to whether the United States should send ministers to the Congress of Panama be debated in public, unless the publication of such documents as it would be necessary to refer to would be prejudicial to negotiations then being carried on and that the President be asked if such objection existed and if so, to name the documents.

Adams replied that all the documents referring to the Congress of Panama had been sent by him in confidence, in accordance with the usages of the Senate and he believed in maintaining this custom of "free confidential intercourse" (2) between the Senate and the President but he left it to the Senate to decide for itself if it wished to depart from this custom.

This reply angered the Senators greatly but on February 23, 1826 it was finally decided to debate the question of the Congress of Panama in executive session.

Although the debate was carried on in private, the speeches were given to the public through various sources. Thus Gales and Seaton's Register for 1826 reports several of the speeches and Benton, in his "Abridgment of the Debates in Congress" summarizes many of them. Some were published as pamphlets as e. g., those of Hayne, Benton, White, Holmes, Johnston (Louisiana) and Woodbury. (3) Besides those just mentioned, Gales and Seaton's Register also contains the speeches of Van Buren, Berrien, Dickerson, and Robbins. The Register did not

(1) Niles' Weekly Register Vol. XIX April 15, 1826 p. 105

(2) Adams, J. Q. - Memoirs Vol. VII, 126

(3) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama, note to p. 394.



report Senator Randolph's speech. In connection with this senator it says in one place, "Mr. Randolph here took part in the debate. His speech on this question was never reported by himself and, in secret session, it is known, no reporters are allowed." (1)

The report of the Committee on Foreign Relations was a mine from which the opposition senators drew their objections to the Panama mission. The outstanding objections to participation in the congress, advanced by the senators, may be grouped as follows:-- fear of the violation of the position of neutrality which the United States was maintaining; anxiety that the participation in the Congress might lead to the entrance of the United States into entangling alliances; doubts as to the far-reaching interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine that were being expressed; the slavery question; the lack of a clear statement by Spanish America as to the organization of the congress, the mode of procedure to be followed and the powers to be granted to the delegates and finally the impropriety of interfering in the religious customs of other nations.

The first three points enumerated above are closely related but for convenience we shall discuss them separately.

In his message of December 26, 1825 President Adams had distinctly stated that the neutrality of the United States was in no way to be violated by attendance at the Congress of Panama. He said, "The invitation has been accepted and ministers on the part of the United States will be commissioned to attend at their deliberations and to take part in them so far as may be compatible with that neutrality from which it is neither our intention nor the desire of the other American states that we should depart." (2)

(1) Gales and Seaton's Register 1826 - column 263

(2) Richardson, J. D. Messages and Papers of the Presidents Vol. II, 330



Also, it had been decided that two classes of questions were to be discussed at the congress:--those concerning the progress of the war between Spanish American countries and Spain i. e., belligerent questions and those in which all the nations assembled, including neutrals, might take part. (1) When plans of aggression towards Spain were to be discussed, the United States was to act the part merely of an observer.

However, some senators expressed fear that the neutrality of the United States was to be endangered. It was stated that mere attendance at an assembly in which belligerent actions against another power were discussed, was sufficient to place the neutrality of the United States in jeopardy. On this point Benton, in his "Thirty Years' View" says "We were at peace with Spain and could not go into any such council without compromising our neutrality and impairing the integrity of our national character." (2)

That President Adams had no thought of engaging the United States in entangling alliances as a result of attendance at the Congress of Panama is seen from the fact that he looked upon the congress as a diplomatic assembly in which problems common to all the nations represented were to be discussed. As Adams expressed it, the representatives of the various nations were "to deliberate upon objects important to the welfare of all." (3) He did not wish the United States to become subservient to any super-government or amphictyonic council which was to control the affairs of the entire continent.

But the opposing senators believed that the United States could not take part in such a congress as that proposed for Panama without finally entering into alliances with Spanish America and that these

(1) Gales & Seaton's Register 1826 - Appendix p. 45, Salazar to Clay.

(2) Benton, T. H. - "Thirty Years' View" - Vol. I, p. 66

(3) Richardson, J. D. - Messages & Papers of the Presidents Vol. II, 331





alliances would lead to the violation of our neutrality.

Washington's warning against entangling alliances was quoted by them. Adams himself answered this objection a little later on in his message to the House of Representatives. He stated that Washington's advice applied only to European entanglements; that in Washington's day the United States was the only independent nation in the Western Hemisphere; that since then many new republics had sprung into existence in America and Washington's advice did not preclude friendly intercourse and relations with these independent American states. (1)

The matter of the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine aroused violent discussions in the Senate. President Adams had made his position on this subject clear in his special message to the Senate. (2)

However, the President's statement did not satisfy all the senators. They were acquainted with Colombia's interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine. (3) Also, many senators, no doubt, were familiar with the article published in the Gaceta de Colombia (4) and copied by newspapers in the United States in which the objects to be forwarded at the Congress of Panama were stated. Among these was the following:--"To take into consideration the means of giving effect to the declarations of the President of the United States of America, in his message to the Congress of last year, with a view to frustrating any future idea of colonization on this continent by the powers of Europe and to resist any principle of interference in our internal affairs." (5)

Moreover, the Senate had before it for study, the formal invitations which the ministers of Colombia, Mexico and Central America had transmitted to the Secretary of State and these invitations showed

(1) Richardson, J. D. Messages & Papers of the Presidents Vol. II, 337

(2) See page 18, above.

(3) See page 19, above.

(4) See page 4, above.

(5) Lockett, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings p. 321, citing from British and Foreign State Papers XII, 894



"that the governments which sent them hoped to use the non-colonization principle (i.e., of the Monroe Doctrine) to form a more intimate connection with the United States." (1) Thus the invitation which the Colombian minister presented to the Secretary of State says, "The manner in which all colonization of European powers on the American continent shall be resisted and their interference in the present contest between Spain and her former colonies prevented are other points of great interest." (2)

The opposition made much of the indiscreet words of Poinsett, the United States minister to Mexico who, in September 1825, concerning the newly liberated republics had said, "The United States had pledged themselves not to permit any other power to interfere either with their independence or form of government." (3)

Secretary Clay, also, in November 1825 had written of "the memorable pledge" of 1823. (4) Now the Secretary explained that this use of the word "pledge" did not mean that the United States was to engage in war merely because Spanish America was attacked. (5)

But the senators were unconvinced. With such statements as the above in mind it can be seen how certain senators based a tremendous opposition to the Congress of Panama on the fact that it would bring forth new and far-reaching interpretations of the Monroe Doctrine which would be certain to lead us into entangling alliances and violation of our neutrality.

Most of the senators, while praising Monroe's words of 1823, believed they were uttered merely for moral effect. They were unalterably opposed to the United States acting as protector for the entire Western Hemisphere or of embroiling itself in war for some Latin American state.

(1) Perkins, D. - The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826 p. 205

(2) Ibid. p. 206, citing from American State Papers, Foreign Relations V, p. 837.

(3) Ibid. p. 209, citing American State Papers, Foreign Relations, V, p.854

(4) Ibid. p. 209.

(5) Ibid. p. 210.





Senator Woodbury of New Hampshire expressed the sentiment of the opposition when he asked, "How many of our gallant sons are to find ignoble graves under the tropical sun of Guatemala, if some petty Hessian Prince should hire a regiment of infantry to Spain!" (1)

When Adams, in his message of December twenty-sixth said he wished to have a public declaration made by the nations assembled at Panama that each would guard its own territory against future European colonization he was urging "the translation of the principle which he himself had evolved into a rule of American public law. .... It certainly involved no dangerous surrender of independence and no entangling alliances." (2)

But this procedure was not looked upon favorably by the opposition senators. It was even said that the dignity of the United States was lowered by such a declaration as the President suggested. As Perkins says, "To take a pledge to other nations to preserve our own territory inviolate was to Hayne, to White of Tennessee and to Forsyth, nothing short of 'degrading'." (3)

It was on the question of slavery that the greatest outbursts of oratory occurred. The opposition based its objections on this score to the facts that the status of Haiti was to be discussed at the Congress, that belligerent operations against Cuba were to be considered, that the abolition of the slave trade was to be furthered, and to the fact that the Spanish American republics had abolished slavery and had raised negroes to positions of trust in the army and the state.

The spectacle of Haiti was ever before the minds of the slave-holding senators. The pictures of the slave insurrection, of the murdering of the masters, of the setting up of a negro republic in which

(1) Gales & Seaton's Register 1826, col. 192

(2) Perkins, D. - The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826, p. 207

(3) Ibid. p. 217.



all offices were closed to whites, were frightful examples of what might possibly happen in the South.

But Haiti had not been invited to attend the Congress of Panama. Also, the administration was opposed to recognizing Haiti as an independent state and we know that, when instructions were finally given to the delegates from the United States, they were told to place the weight of their influence in the congress against recognition. So there was no difference in outlook between the administration and the opposition on the question of Haiti.

But the status of Haiti was a subject which the Spanish Americans had declared to be suitable for discussion by both belligerents and neutrals (1) and many of the senators from the South did not care to have the United States represented where the subject of Haiti was even mentioned.

It is also true that both the administration and the opposition regarded the question of Cuba with the same outlook. (2) Both were opposed to Cuba passing from the hands of Spain into those of any other nation. Both were opposed to seeing an independent negro republic set up in the island. The administration had even requested Mexico and Colombia to suspend the pursuance of plans for an attack upon Cuba until the outcome of the intervention of Russia with Spain in the interests of peace should be known.

On this point the historian Burgess says, "It is more probable that one of the reasons which moved President Adams and Mr. Clay to urge attendance upon the congress was to be in a position to restrain the Spanish American states from attempting to seize Cuba and Porto Rico." (3)

(1) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 322  
 (2) Burgess, J. W. - The Middle Period-1817-1858, p. 153  
 (3) Ibid. p. 152.





But the opposition senators made a tremendous to-do on this subject. They pictured slave insurrections breaking out in Cuba as the result of attacks by Spanish America and spreading thence with all their terrors to the United States.

On the subject of Haiti they pictured negro ministers from that republic residing at Washington and spreading discontent and the seeds of insurrection among negroes to the south.

There were murmurs of dissent in the Senate because the subject of the abolition of the African slave trade was to be discussed. But the United States, as early as 1807, had passed a law prohibiting the importation of slaves from Africa. Also, in Monroe's administration, the House of Representatives had passed a resolution looking toward co-operation with other powers in an attempt to suppress this trade. Some time thereafter a treaty with regard to this matter was drawn up with Colombia but the Senate failed to ratify it. Now Colombia would like further discussion of the matter.

Finally there were strong objections from certain slaveholding senators to the United States being represented in a congress where negro delegates might be present. It was known that the Spanish American states had abolished slavery and that negroes had equal chances with the whites to rise to places of trust. Thus some were found in high posts in the armies and governments of Spanish America. Could delegates from a slaveholding nation sit in a conference with nations which upheld such principles? The thought was unbearable to some.

Thus, by use of the arguments mentioned above, certain senators hoped to raise up sentiment against the administration measure.

The criticism of the administration for failing to obtain from the Spanish American governments clear statements of the methods of organization of the congress, the modes of procedure to be used and





the powers to be granted to the delegates, was a just and very serious one. The opposition claimed the United States had no right to engage in a congress, the nature of which was so vaguely set forth. It was claimed that for this reason alone, if for no other, we should refuse to participate in the congress.

As for the religious question it should be said that when President Adams, in his message to the Senate, suggested that "principles of religious liberty be advanced" he meant only to secure religious toleration for citizens of the United States residing in Spanish America, (1) although agreements to this effect had already been reached with some of the southern republics.

The opposition seized upon this topic and in glowing terms decried interference in the internal affairs of other nations and especially along religious lines.

Senator Hayne of South Carolina made a long speech covering all phases of the Panama Congress question. Extracts from his speech make a good summarization of the stand taken by the opposition in this affair.

Hayne said in part, "From these documents, no man can deny that the Congress of Panama is to be composed of deputies from belligerent states and that its objects are essentially belligerent. .... If the character of the Congress is belligerent - no neutral can lawfully be there. .... A strict and honorable neutrality must keep us out of any meeting not having peaceful objects exclusively. .... The ignorance in which we are left of the mode of the organization of the Congress, its manner of proceeding and the form and substance of the powers of the Representatives, should constitute a decisive inducement to abstain from involving ourselves in such a measure. .... Mr. Monroe's declaration, I repeat was intended to produce a moral effect abroad;

(1) President Adams explained his stand in his later message to the House of Representatives.



he designed it for the atmosphere of Europe .... it left foreign nations under a vague impression of what we might do if the event alluded to should ever happen. .... On the slave question my opinion is this: I consider our rights in that species of property as not even open to discussion either here or elsewhere. .... Let me solemnly declare, once for all, that the Southern States never will permit and never can permit any interference whatever in their domestic concerns and that the very day on which the unhallowed attempt shall be made by the authorities of the Federal Government, we will consider ourselves as driven from the Union. .... I abhor the idea of combinations among sovereign states for any purpose whatever. .... We can accomplish no good and may involve ourselves in difficulties by counselling with those who are merely to settle the mode of co-operation in the invasion of Cuba and Porto Rico - a measure already decided on. .... If it is against the spirit of our Constitution to interfere in any way with the religion of our own People, I should conclude it must be altogether foreign to our policy to interfere with the religion of other nations. .... We are about to violate the maxim of the Father of his Country which enjoins us .... to cultivate .... entangling alliances with none." (1)

Most of the orators of the Senate were numbered among the opponents of the Panama mission.

Among the administration friends who spoke in favor of the mission were Robbins of Rhode Island and Johnston of Louisiana. The latter's speech is noteworthy from the fact that he was from the South and a slave holder.

He started out by refuting the claim that attendance at the congress would lead to the violation of the neutrality of the United States. The assembly was to be a "meeting of diplomatic agents .... to act

(1) Gales & Seaton's Register Vol. II 1826 columns 152-175





ministerially." Even if a treaty were formed (which was most unlikely) it would have to be sanctioned by the Senate before it became binding on the United States.

As to the Monroe Doctrine, he said that that "memorable declaration has had its effect." Monroe's statement plus England's recognition of the new states had thwarted any intention the Holy Alliance might have entertained of interfering in America.

Johnston's remarks on the questions of Cuba, Haiti and the slave trade were especially interesting. He stated that he represented a state which, from its location, would be the first to feel the effect of any disturbance in Cuba. He wished that island to retain its present status and said, "It is our interest and our duty to keep Cuba as it is; a movement there would be dangerous to us. .... Let the United States ministers go to Panama and remonstrate against an attack on Cuba, so dangerous to us."

Neither was any change in our attitude towards Haiti desired. Here too our ministers at Panama could "remonstrate against a measure so offensive to us" as the recognition of Haiti by the Spanish American states.

Of the African slave trade he declared, "This inhuman traffic which fills the world with misery ought to be effectually suppressed." This suppression would not interfere with slavery in the United States. Also, ministers from the United States should be willing to discuss this question as it was this country which, a year or so previously, had first broached the matter to Colombia.

Before concluding, Mr. Johnston mentioned such subjects as those relating to trade and international maritime law and strongly supported the stand taken on these matters by the administration. (1)

(1) Gales and Seaton's Register Vol. II 1826, columns 218-234.



Of all the debaters in the Senate, John Randolph of Roanoke was the most violent and vituperative. He intimated that the invitations to the Congress of Panama did not come from the Spanish American Republics but were "manufactured" in the office of the Secretary of State.(1) He spoke disparagingly of the alliance between the "Puritan and black-leg." (2)

News of this speech was brought to the Secretary of State and the outcome was a duel between Randolph and Clay. However, no blood was shed and the two opponents shook hands and forgot the matter. Benton, in writing of this affair says, "It was about the last of the high-toned duels that I have witnessed and among the highest-toned that I have ever witnessed." (3)

In the manner indicated above the Senate debated from February 23 to March 14, 1826 on the expediency of the United States being represented at the Congress of Panama. The opponents of the Panama mission had the oratory but the friends of the administration had the votes and on March 14 were able to bring the matter to a conclusion. The resolution of the Committee on Foreign Relations that, "It is not expedient, at this time, for the United States to send ministers to the Congress of American Nations assembled at Panama" was defeated by a vote of 19 to 24. (4)

The nominations of the delegates Anderson and Sergeant were immediately thereafter confirmed, Anderson by a vote of 27 to 17 and Sergeant by one of 26 to 18. (5) Sergeant, no doubt, lost a vote because of his well-known anti-slavery views. (6)

(1) Schouler, J. Hist. of U. S. under Constitution. Vol.III, 367

(2) Ibid. p. 367

(3) Benton, T. H. Thirty Years' View. Vol. I, p. 77

(4) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 396

(5) Ibid. p. 397.

(6) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama, note to p. 404.





Rochester, the secretary was confirmed with a vote of 23 to 16. (1)  
The Panama Mission in the House of Representatives

The attention of the House of Representatives was called to the Congress of Panama as early as December 16, 1825 when Hamilton of South Carolina asked for further information on the subject of the Panama mission, which had been mentioned in the President's annual message. When he heard that the President intended to send full information to the House later on, Hamilton postponed the consideration of his resolution, retaining the right of bringing it up again if he so desired.

Adams looked upon this action of Hamilton's as an expression of the enmity of the opposition in the House.

On January 31, 1826, Hamilton's resolution was again taken up and after a debate of about four days, was adopted. The desired documents were sent by President Adams, together with a message from him, on March 15, 1826, the day after the Senate had confirmed the nominations of Anderson and Sergeant.

This message of President Adams to the House of Representatives was "far superior to the message to the Senate." (2) In it President Adams answered the objections to the Panama mission which had been raised in the Senate. He started out by saying his "first and greatest inducement was to meet in the spirit of kindness and friendship an overture made in that spirit by three sister Republics of this hemisphere."

Then he assures his listeners that the neutrality of the United States will not be violated; that the assembly at Panama was to be diplomatic and consultative and not "legislative."

The objects which the United States hoped to attain were again enumerated as in the message of December twenty-sixth.

The United States delegates were to throw their weight against the recognition of Haiti. As for the discussion of the abolition of the African slave trade, the United States could have no objection in view

(1) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama p. 404

(2) Ibid. p. 417





of the fact that in the previous administration a resolution to that effect had been passed by the House of Representatives. On the question of religious liberty he said he hoped to advance "principles of religious liberty, not by any interference in the internal concerns" of the nations but by "claiming for United States citizens, religious freedom."

Finally, a request for an appropriation to cover the expenses of the mission was made. (1)

In characterizing the aims of the United States as thus set forth by President Adams, Mr. Arragon says, "The particular objects aimed at in the Assembly were negative (against commercial discrimination, the recognition of Haiti, the invasion of Cuba) or were treated in a conservative fashion (as religious toleration, the slave trade, the modes of applying the Monroe Doctrine). With the possible exception of neutral rights, little positive good was specified." (2)

The President's message and documents were referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

On March 25, 1826, Crowninshield reported that the Committee believed it to be expedient that the United States be represented at the Congress of Panama and suggested that an appropriation be made.

On the same day the Ways and Means Committee reported a bill calling for an appropriation of \$40,000 for defraying the expenses of the mission.

On April 4, 1826, McLane of Delaware introduced an amendment to the resolution of expediency reported by the Foreign Relations Committee, whereby certain limitations would be placed on the Executive with regard to the instructions to be given to the delegates to the congress. This amendment was superseded by a more drastic one proposed by Buchanan and until April 21, 1826 a heated debate centered about the adoption of this

(1) Richardson, J. D. Messages & Papers of the Presidents Vol.II, 329-31.

(2) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama p. 419



latter amendment. In this debate every phase of the subject was discussed.

However, the administration had more friends in the House than in the Senate and among these was the orator, Daniel Webster. He upheld the administration measure valiantly, making it clear that there were just two matters for the House to decide:--first, did it wish to assume the responsibility of failing to make an appropriation for the mission after the Senate had confirmed the delegates, and second, did it wish to overstep and interfere in purely executive prerogatives. (1)

The elements of opposition, however, were able to muster sufficient strength to pass the Buchanan amendment. This was a blow at the Executive and the friends of the administration joined with the out-and-out opponents of the measure to defeat the resolution of expediency offered by the Committee on Foreign Relations but also thereby killing the obnoxious Buchanan amendment. (2)

Three days later, on April 24, 1826, the appropriation bill was passed; the administration measure had been saved.

#### Summarization of the Panama Congress case in the Congress of the United States.

In November 1825 when the Spanish Americans had presented their formal invitations to the United States to attend the Congress at Panama, no extended legislative opposition had been expected by Clay. "Of course," he wrote to Anderson, "the whole movement depends upon the concurrence of the Senate, which is, however, confidently anticipated." (3)

In his instructions to William B. Rochester, who had been selected as the secretary of the mission, Clay set the dates of December twenty to January twenty as those, within which, Rochester should make

(1) Gales & Seaton's Register 1826, column 2254.

(2) Perkins, D. The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826, p. 220

(3) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama, p. 373





his departure for Panama. (1)

Opposition to the mission however, was apparent very soon after the opening of Congress. Thus it was on December 16, 1825, even before Adams had delivered his special message to the Senate, that Representative Hamilton asked for further information on the proposed congress. Senator Branch's resolution against the President came while the Panama mission was still under consideration by the Senate's Committee on Foreign Relations.

Adams might well write in his diary under date of January 9, 1826, "This is apparently the first measure in which the opposition are endeavoring to array themselves. They are bitter and rancorous, but are yet discordant among themselves." (2)

Furthermore it must be noted that the debate in Congress was not on the matter of confirming the delegates or of appropriating funds for the mission as presented by the Administration, but rather on the matter of the expediency of sending delegates to attend the Congress and on the appropriateness of the subjects they were instructed to discuss there.

What was the underlying cause of this great opposition to the administration measure? In the case of some, no doubt, there was sincere concern for the best interests of the nation. This is particularly true of those senators who objected because no clear and sufficient statement of the aims, methods of organization and procedure, and powers to be granted to the delegates to the congress had been given by the Spanish American republics. Also there was some sincere fear and distrust of entangling alliances and I have no doubt, some of the Southern members were sincere in their fear of the Haitian question.

But, it must be said, that for the greater part, the real cause of the opposition was factional jealousy - a dislike of the Adminis-

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 375

(2) Adams, J. Q. - Memoirs, Vol. XII, 102.



tration and a determination to make it appear odious. With this as an underlying motive, the opposition attacked the Panama mission ostensibly, because of the reasons discussed above.

Let us here give the opinions of certain historians who have studied the matter or at least certain phases of it, very carefully.

J. B. Lockey says, "The opposition to the mission to Panama, in so far as it was genuine, was based upon Washington's precept against entangling alliances; but it was in fact largely factitious, and indicated hostility to the administration much more than disapproval of the idea of co-operation with the new states. The question of slavery was brought into the discussion for the purpose of inflaming party passion, but it had practically no effect upon the policy either of the United States or of the other American States regarding Haiti, Cuba, and Porto Rico. .... It is difficult to believe that the United States would have been less opposed to the transfer of Cuba to another power or that Colombia and Mexico would have been less anxious to acquire it, had there been no slaves in the island." (1)

Dexter Perkins, who has made a special study of the Monroe Doctrine in this period says, "The vote on these resolutions (i.e., Buchanan's amendment particularly) was, it is well known, colored with faction; and to weigh the force of this perverting element is an impossible and fruitless task. .... The Panama debates contribute nothing to the positive development of the Monroe Doctrine." (2)

R. F. Arragon says, "A consistent opposition was thus made to the measure by nearly one-half of the senators whose action had the appearance of that of an organized group; and while the anti-administration elements in the House did not act similarly as a unit against the mission, their votes and speeches distinguished both the extreme and moderate

(1) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 398

(2) Perkins, D. - The Monroe Doctrine 1823-1826, p. 221





groups rather sharply from the loyal supporters of the administration measure. This was a division based, not on the merits of the question, but on a conscious political antagonism to the successful candidate and to his Secretary of State on the part of those who had favored his rivals for the mantle of Monroe." (1)

Contemporary opinions as to the underlying cause of the opposition to the Panama mission are not lacking.

Thus Webster, as early as December 31, 1825 wrote, "An opposition is evidently brewing. It will show itself on the Panama question." (2)

Again on January 29, 1826 he wrote, "It (i.e., the Panama mission) is supposed to furnish some plausible grounds for opposition and there will be a rallying of forces on the occasion." (3)

President Adams was clearly aware of the determined opposition against him. In his diary of January 31, 1826 he wrote, "This is the first subject upon which a great effort has been made in both Houses to combine the discordant elements of the Crawford and Jackson and Calhoun men into a united opposition against the Administration. It is at an early stage of its progress but has already become complicated and admonishes me to proceed with extreme circumspection." (4)

Again on February 3, 1826 he confided to his diary, "There has been much manoeuvring in the House; first, to defeat the resolution indirectly; and secondly to clog it with embarrassments to the Executive." (5)

Henry Clay was also conscious of a factional opposition. Writing on February 20, 1826 he said, "As to the Panama mission, it has encountered much delay and a good deal of opposition in the Senate. ..

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 461

(2) Webster, D. - Private Correspondence Vol. I, 401. Webster to Judge

(3) Ibid. Vol. I. p. 401. Webster to Ezekial Webster. (Story.

(4) Adams, J. Q. Memoirs, Vol. VII, p. 111

(5) Ibid. p. 111.





.. There are some fifteen or sixteen Senators determined to oppose the administration at all events and that measure especially. There are eight or ten others who in private feelings are inimical but who are restrained by the state of things at their respective homes. When these eight or ten unite .... with the others, together they form a majority. .... The expedients to which it has resorted to procrastinate the decision, will surprise the country, if it is ever allowed to know them." (1)

But Adams, Clay, and Webster were all friends of the Panama mission and wished to see it succeed. What of those opposed to the measure? Have any of them made statements as to the real motives of the opposition? The following quotations are from the work of Thomas H. Benton, one of the leaders of the opposition in the Senate. He wrote, "Though long since sunk into oblivion it was a master subject on the political theatre during its day." Again, "Mr. Adams commenced right by asking the advice of the Senate before he instituted the mission; but the manner in which the object was pursued made it a matter of opposition to the administration to refuse it and greatly impaired the harmony which ought to exist between the President and the Senate." Also, "It was very nearly a party vote, the democracy as a party being against it." Finally, "No question in its day excited more heat and intemperate discussion or more feeling between a President and Senate." (2)

Martin Van Buren, the leader of the opposition in the Senate, said in commenting on a talk he had had with Calhoun, "There was also an obvious (though not expressed) concurrence in opinion between us that opposition to so prominent a measure of the Administration could

(1) Clay, H. - Works; life, correspondence, speeches. Edited by C. Colton. Vol. IV, p. 137.

(2) All four quotations from Benton, T. H. Thirty Years' View, Vol. I 65-69



not fail to lead to an ultimate union of efforts for its overthrow." (1)

Arragon, in commenting on the above quotation says, "A concert of influence was thus inaugurated by these two skillful politicians and the campaign begun." (2)

Van Buren is also said to have made the remark, "They have beaten us by a few votes after a hard battle; but if they had only taken the other side and refused the mission we should have had them!" (3) Such a remark, if truly attributed to Van Buren, surely shows opposition merely because of dislike for the Administration or because of faction.

An analysis of the vote in the Senate and the House on the Panama mission shows some interesting facts.

If the question of slavery were the chief obstacle in the way of the Panama mission one would expect a vote absolutely on sectional lines. But such is not the case. The vote in the Senate followed party lines, strictly. Thus, of the 24 votes in favor of the mission, 8 were from Southern senators and of the 19 votes opposing the mission, 7 were from Northern members. (4) Also, we must not forget that the most forceful upholder of the administration measure in the Senate was Johnston of Louisiana, himself a slave holder.

In discussing this matter of the partisan vote of the members of Congress Arragon says, "The comparison of the views of Congressmen on the presidency in 1824 and 1825 and their attitude in the Panama Congress question indicates that the lines in the latter contest were not drawn entirely upon those of the earlier one but almost so, only one-sixth in the House (19 of 118) and one-third in the Senate (14 of 40) neglecting such a criterion. An analysis of this minority, moreover,

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 473, citing from Van Buren, Autobiography p. 200

(2) Ibid. p. 473

(3) Burgess, J. W. The Middle Period, p. 153

(4) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 399.





shows that, in practically every case, the contradiction is explicable on partisan grounds, the change being usually merely a symptom of passage to another political group." (1)

Whatever the cause of the opposition we know that the Panama mission was before the Senate for two months and three weeks before the final vote was taken. In the House, almost seven weeks elapsed before the appropriation bill was voted upon. In all, the case was before Congress from December 26, 1825 to May 3, 1826. (2)

The first result of such a long debate was that the minister Sergeant and the secretary Rochester, who had been instructed to leave for Panama by January 20, 1826 at the latest, could not move on that date.

The other result of such a long and heated debate was that the factional opposition to the administration was consolidated and thus was able to bring its weight to bear against later measures of the Executive.

The delegates to the Congress of Panama were finally commissioned on May 8, 1826 and received their instructions from Mr. Clay.

These instructions were not made public until 1829. (3) They follow along the lines declared by Adams in his messages to Congress. As these objects have already been mentioned in this paper, only outstanding features of Clay's instructions will be noted here.

He starts out with the fact that the congress is to be diplomatic and not legislative in character and all notion of the creation of an amphictyonic council is to be dismissed.

On the non-colonization claim of the Monroe Doctrine the American delegates were to work along the line suggested by Adams, i.e., each

(1) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 486

(2) Gales & Seaton's Register 1826 - column 671 for final action by Senate.

(3) For Clay's Instructions see Niles' Weekly Register Vol. XXXVI, May 28, 1829 pp. 71-80.



nation was to guard its own territory against foreign encroachments.

Haiti was not to be recognized by the United States and as to Cuba, the position always held by the United States on that question was to be maintained.

One subject mentioned in Clay's instructions of which little was heard in the debate in Congress was that of an inter-oceanic canal. Clay believed this project should be carried through not by one nation but by the united efforts of several. Information as to the practicality of such a project being so meagre, Clay suggested that nothing more than certain preliminary arrangements be made at that time.

In general, "the spirit of American unity pervades Clay's instructions. Dangers to be met, interests to be promoted, problems to be solved, were common to all and demanded common counsel and united action." (1)

#### The Congress of Panama.

The Congress of Panama was formally opened on June 22, 1826 and adjourned on July 15, 1826. Four nations were represented at the congress, namely:--Colombia, Mexico, Central America, and Peru. Great Britain and Holland sent unofficial agents.

Among the nations which, though invited were not represented by delegates at the congress were Chile, Buenos Aires, Bolivia, Brazil, and the United States.

The absence of the United States was due chiefly to the prolonged debate in Congress which prevented the delegates from making an early start for the seat of the congress. When the ministers were finally commissioned, however, other factors arose which prevented their attendance at the Congress of Panama.

Richard C. Anderson, American minister to Colombia, and one of the delegates confirmed by the Senate, was instructed by Clay (2) to

(1) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 427

(2) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 373 citing from Bureau of Index & Archives, Instructions to Ministers Vol. X.





leave Bogota, travel to Porto Bello and there await the arrival of Sergeant, whence together they were to travel overland to Panama.

Accordingly, Anderson set out from Bogota before the middle of June. His journey took him down the Magdalena. Delays in the journey, such as the stranding of his boat, occurred. Already far from robust, the dangerous summer climate of the region brought on a fever. In this condition Anderson reached Cartagena on July 14, 1826 and after lying ill for ten days, died there.

In regard to John Sergeant, the other delegate, many historians are in error. They say that he reached Panama after the adjournment of the congress. As a matter of fact, Sergeant never left the United States for Panama. The long debate in Congress delayed his confirmation so long that he saw it would be the summer season before he could start for Panama. He feared the dangerous summer climate of the region and refused to go at that time, offering his resignation to Clay. (1) Clay, recalling the trouble he had had in obtaining the confirmation of Sergeant by the Senate, refused his resignation and offered to delay his departure until the autumn and then perhaps to a more salubrious region to which Clay was hoping the congress might be adjourned.

We have further proofs that Sergeant did not leave the United States for Panama in the summer of 1826. On July 4, 1826, the President's father, John Adams, died and the President traveled to Quincy, Massachusetts to settle affairs. In his diary the President speaks of the various persons he met in his travels. Under date of July 10, 1826 he wrote, "We arrived at Philadelphia about nine. I called upon Mr. John Sergeant. .... At noon I embarked in the steamboat Philadelphia for Trenton. John Sergeant determined to go with me to New York." (2)

(1) Arragon, R. F. The Congress of Panama, p. 500 quoting from Sergeant to Clay, May 8, 1826 in State Dept. Package #156.

(2) Adams, J. Q. - Memoirs Vol. VII, p. 126.





On July 11, 1826 he wrote, "We reached New York at half-past eleven. .... I stopped and dined at the City Hotel. Sergeant (and others) dined with us." (1)

On these very dates, July 10 and 11, the Congress of ~~Panama of Panama~~ was in session.

One further proof that Sergeant did not leave for Panama in the summer of 1826 is the fact that the warship Lexington which, according to Clay's instructions of May 8, 1826, was to have conveyed Sergeant to Porto Bello, spent the entire season from June to September on a cruise in northern waters. (2)

Sergeant did, however, leave for Tacubaya, Mexico, in the autumn of 1826 to attend the adjourned meeting of the congress. (3)

To illustrate how misfortune seemed to follow the Panama mission I cite the case of Mr. Wharton, a messenger employed by Clay to carry his regrets as to the absence of Mr. Sergeant and other dispatches to the assembled nations at Panama. Wharton left New York early in June. His ship was wrecked off the coast of the Bahamas. Finally Wharton succeeded in obtaining other shipping but reached Cartegena on July 26, 1826, two days after the death of Anderson and eleven days, after the congress had adjourned. (4)

As for the deliberations and conclusions of the Congress of Panama, it is not a part of this paper to discuss them. Suffice it to say that "a treaty of perpetual union, league and confederation" was drawn up as were also various conventions relating to future meetings, to the qualifications of members, and to the kind and amount of military and naval resources to be contributed by each toward a

(1) Adams, J. Q. Memoirs Vol. VII, p. 126

(2) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 315 citing from American State Papers, Naval Affairs, II, 731, 745

(3) Ibid. p. 348

(4) Arragon, R. F. - The Congress of Panama p. 502



permanent army and navy. (1)

Of the four nations assembled, only one, Colombia, finally ratified the conventions of the Congress of Panama. (2) Simon Bolivar, who had not been a delegate to the congress, was disappointed at the outcome and opposed the ratification of the treaties and conventions of the congress. (3)

Among the worst enemies which the congress had however, were the dangerous summer climate and conditions prevalent at Panama. Yellow fever was feared by all. In one month, Dawkins, the British agent, had lost his secretary and one other member of his group. The Colombian representative had lost two servants. (4)

So, chiefly because of these conditions it was agreed to adjourn the meeting to Tacubaya, a healthful place not far from Mexico City. The adjourned meeting was to open within eight months of the closing at Panama. (5)

Sergeant, accordingly, traveled to Tacubaya. Poinsett, the American minister to Mexico, was to take the place of Anderson.

According to the plan of the President, Sergeant was to leave Philadelphia at about the middle of November 1826. (6)

We know that he was in Mexico in January 1827 because Clay, in a letter to Sergeant and Poinsett, written in March 1827 mentions the fact that he had received a dispatch which had been sent from Mexico on January 19, 1827 by Sergeant. (7).

(1) Lockey, J. B. - Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings p. 340

(2) Ibid. p. 347

(3) Ibid. p. 347

(4) Ibid. p. 345

(5) Niles' Weekly Register Vol. XXXVI (1829) Clay to Sergeant and Poinsett, p. 80.

(6) Adams, J. Q. Memoirs Vol. XII, p. 160

(7) Niles' Weekly Register Vol. XXXVI (1829) p. 80





Clay instructed Sergeant to remain in Mexico until June 1, 1827, after which date, if the congress had not assembled, he was at liberty to return to the United States. If the Congress met after that date, Poinsett was to represent the United States at it. (1)

However, in the months following the adjournment of the Congress of Panama, political upheavals occurred in various Spanish American states with the result that Colombia alone, of all Spanish America, sent representatives to Tacubaya and thus the adjourned meeting of the Congress of Panama never took place.

#### Conclusion.

The utmost the United States might have gained had her delegates attended the Congress of Panama.

Had the United States been represented at the Congress of Panama she might have secured the lasting friendship of Spanish America. This would show itself in a desire for co-operation in all matters concerning the United States and her neighbors to the South.

In these matters the United States, acting the part of the "elder brother" would take the lead and show the way. Latin America would acquiesce in this leadership because of the disinterested, fair policy displayed by the United States.



In such a way the government at Washington would be able to have certain favorite doctrines adopted by all America. Such, for example, are the doctrines that "free ships make free goods," that "paper blockades" should be abolished, that the rights of neutrals in time of war should be upheld. When all America had united in declaring such principles, Europe must, perforce, take heed.

Then too, the Congress of Panama, if successful, would have resulted in a great increase in trade between the United States and Latin America. This too was one of the subjects which the United States delegates had been instructed to bring forward.

The increasing intercourse thus resulting would have brought about a clearer understanding and greater sympathy of one part of America for the other and the amount of misunderstanding which exists today would have been wiped out long ago.

If the Congress of Panama could have produced the results named above it was a tremendous mistake for the United States not to have been represented at it.

#### Factors Working Against such a Happy Outcome

But was it possible that the gains mentioned above could have been made? Most likely, not. There were certain factors militating against such a successful and happy issue from the Congress of Panama.

Thus, the attitude of Great Britain was a troublesome point. We have seen earlier in this paper that Canning was jealous of the United States; he was opposed to the United States assuming the hegemony of the Western Hemisphere. Temperley, the



English historian, speaking of Canning's policy with regard to the Congress of Panama says, "His plan seems to have been to detach the South American states from alliance with or dependence on the United States." (1)

Also, Canning had expressed himself as opposed to any change in maritime law such as the delegates from the United States had been instructed to bring up for discussion. (2) Had the United States been represented at the congress she undoubtedly would have clashed with Great Britain.

Then too, Great Britain would have exerted her influence, which was great, with Spanish America, to resist the intended program of the United States. On this point Temperley says of Canning, "He meant to indicate to the South American states that their true friend was distant England, not the adjacent English-speaking land." (3)

Hence our hopes of furthering friendly relations with Latin America would have received a setback.

Not only with Great Britain was there a possibility of a clash as a result of the successful attendance of the United States at the Congress of Panama. It does not stretch the imagination too much to 'see the opposition of the Holy Alliance aroused. If Great Britain and the Holy Alliance both thought that an American confederacy was arising to counteract or balance that of Europe, what suspicions and entanglements might not have resulted!

(1) Temperley, H.W.V. - The Later American Policy of George Canning in American Historical Review Vol. XI p.783

(2) See page 11, above.

(3) Temperley, H.W.V. - The Later American Policy of Geo. Canning in American Historical Review Vol.XI p. 782





But aside from the fear of clashing with Europe, the successful attendance of the United States at the Congress of Panama seemed doomed by conditions in Latin America itself.

The chief object of Spanish America in calling the Congress of Panama was to take steps toward protecting themselves from possible attacks of Spain or the Holy Alliance. A confederation of Spanish American states, each contributing its quota toward a common army and navy was contemplated.

Because of the possible protection they might afford, both the United States and Great Britain were invited to attend.

The Spanish Americans read into the Monroe Doctrine the intention of the United States to protect all America from encroachments from Europe and they wished closer contacts with the United States on this ground.

Thus it can be seen that the Congress of Panama, while approaching Pan-Americanism as we know it today, had not in reality the same foundation. We understand Pan-Americanism as a movement aiming to bring about a more sympathetic understanding and a finer co-operation between the various nations of America. The Congress of Panama was called solely for the protection of the new republics and included any nations likely to help in this matter, not confining the invitations to America alone.

How doomed to disappointment the Spanish Americans were to be when the attitude of the United States was made clear to them! Absolutely no political alliances; no extension of the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine beyond that declared in the message of President Adams! (1)

(1) See page 18 above.



This apparent lack of sympathy by the United States in the aims of Spanish America would be fertile ground for the growth of feelings of animosity, suspicion and perhaps hatred toward us.

Also, at the Congress of Panama delegates from only four of the Spanish American republics assembled. To be sure, others would have been represented but were late in appointing delegates. But Buenos Aires, destined to become one of the leading states of South America, thought the idea of a confederacy impracticable and was opposed to the congress. If the United States had succeeded in establishing satisfying relations with the nations assembled at the congress, what of those that failed to join it? Could the looked-for good results be obtained while Buenos Aires was outside the arrangements made with the United States? (1)

Then, too, the questions of Cuba and Haiti were slated for discussion at Panama. Certain parts of Spanish America took a directly opposite stand on these matters from that of the United States. Could these delicate questions have been smoothed out amicably and satisfactorily to all?

But perhaps the most serious obstacle to the inauguration of closer and more friendly relations between Latin America and the United States lay in the unstable political conditions of the new republics.

The treaties and conventions arrived at in the Congress of Panama in 1826 were ratified by only one of the four governments represented. The adjourned meeting to be held at Tacubaya was never convened because political upheavals pre-

(1) Lockey, J. B. Pan-Americanism, Its Beginnings, p. 284





vented all the states but Colombia from sending delegates.

Thus, if the United States did arrive at any agreements with the southern republics, how long would Spanish America uphold its end of the bargain?

The facts are that the Latin American governments were too unstable and too lacking in political experience to live up to any agreements or even to follow the leadership of the United States in complicated political or international questions.

And what of the United States? Would any agreements made at Panama have been ratified by that government or would they have been turned into a political "foot-ball" for the use of Congress. The long debate preceding the confirmation of the delegates to the Congress at Panama leads one to think that a similar delay might have occurred upon the question of ratifying any agreements arrived at there.

By failing to be represented at the Congress of Panama, it is probable that the United States saved itself much trouble as, for example, a clash with Great Britain. On this point Temperley, in speaking of Canning says, "The line which he adopted was likely to lead at length to conflict between the United States and England." (1)

Also, the possibilities of a clash with the Holy Alliance, of arousing great animosity in Spanish America towards the United States and of entering into those engagements which in all likelihood would lead to those entangling alliances so dreaded by our statesmen were other points of trouble the United States had avoided.

(1) Temperley, H.W.V The Later American Policy of Geo. Canning in American Historical Review Vol. XI p. 796



Did the United States miss an opportunity for good?

Bearing all the points just enumerated in mind it may be safely said that the United States did not miss an opportunity for good by failing to be represented at the Congress of Panama.

In closing I shall quote the words of the historian J. W. Burgess, who upholds this conclusion. He says, "It is not probable that any opportunity for doing good or receiving good was lost by the non-attendance of representatives from the United States upon the deliberations of the Panama Congress. It is far more probable that both the doing and the suffering of injury were escaped." (1)

(1) Burgess, J. W. The Middle Period p. 154.



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